

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the subject application is respectfully requested.

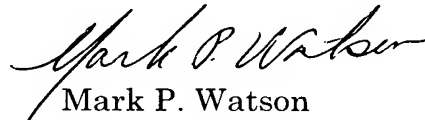
In response to the rejection under 35 USC 101, applicant has cancelled Claim 10 and amended Claim 11 in accordance with the Examiner's suggestion.

Each of independent Claims 1, 6, 7 and 11 has been amended to address the Examiner's claim objections, the rejection under 35 USC 112, and to better define the present invention and further distinguish it over the prior art cited under 35 USC 103(a).

In the present invention, two or more work-flow systems share (via connection to the computer apparatus) a method server-apparatus that reads electronic mail and determines which work-flow system the electronic mail relates to, i.e. the "related work-flow system." The shared method-server apparatus then sends a command that is included in the electronic mail to the related work-flow system, which executes the work-flow corresponding to the command. Neither Yamamoto nor Shimamura, alone or in combination, disclose or suggest a shared method-server apparatus. In Yamamoto, each of the work-flow systems 100 has an associated switching apparatus that sends and receives work flow data via electronic mail. Each switching apparatus is connected to each other (see Fig. 2), not to a method server apparatus. In this direct connection system, the electronic mail is sent from a source directly to a destination. There is no need in Yamamoto (or Shimamura), nor any suggestion, of a method server apparatus that reads the electronic mail and determines which work-flow system the electronic mail relates to, and then sends a command in the electronic mail to the related work-flow system.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, applicant respectfully requests favorable reconsideration of the present application.

Respectfully submitted,


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